

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph 4 of page 2 with the following amended paragraph:

In further related embodiments of the invention, the system may include a connector, which may be a Y-connector. First tubing is coupled at one end to the first port and at another end to the connector. Second tubing is coupled at one end to the sampling chamber and at another end to the connector. Third tubing is coupled at one end to the second port and at another end to the connector ~~second port~~, wherein the connector is a Y-connector. The one-way valve may be positioned within the first tubing.

Please replace paragraph 2 of page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

As illustrated in the embodiment of Fig. 1, the first conduit 108 is connected to a three-way connector 114. The three-way connector is further connected to the second port 103 and the sampling chamber 104 via a second conduit 109 and a third conduit 110, respectively. While the fluid flow in the first conduit 108 is unidirectional due to the one-way valve 160, the flow in the third conduit ~~second conduit~~ 110 is capable of flowing bidirectionally. Fluid in the ~~second~~ third conduit 110 can thus flow towards the sampling chamber 104 when a sample of fluid is being loaded, and away from the sampling chamber 104 when the sample fluid is delivered to the desired destination via the second port 103.

Please replace paragraph 2 of page 10 with the following amended paragraph:

In other embodiments, the second port 103 may include a hollow spike 161 ~~460~~ in fluid communication with the second conduit 109 and defining at least one passageway through which fluid may flow. To prevent sample fluid from exiting the

spike 161 460 prior to the transfer of sample fluid from the sampling chamber 104, the spike 161 460 may be encapsulated in a elastomeric sheath 162 that can be pierced by the spike 161 460 when fluid transfer is desired. Alternatively, or in combination with an elastomeric sheath 162, a clamp may be positioned, without limitation, on the second conduit. The spike 161 460 may also be covered by a cap 164 that provides protection against accidental contact with spike 161 460.

Please replace paragraph 4 of page 10 with the following amended paragraph:

In various embodiments, the container may be a vial that can be used while testing the sample fluid. The vial 301 may include, without limitation, a septum 302, as shown Fig. 3 (prior art). The vial 301 may be evacuated, such that when the hollow spike 161 460 of system 100 pierces the septum 302, the sample fluid contained in the system 100 is drawn by the vacuum into the vial 301.

Please replace paragraph 5 of page 10 with the following amended paragraph:

After transferring the sample fluid from the sampling chamber 104 to the desired destination, a needle guard 166 may be slid down the second conduit 109 so as to cover the hollow spike 161 460. In various embodiments, the needle guard 166 may clip or snap over the hollow spike 161 466 so as to lock the needle guard 166 in place over the hollow spike 161 460, effectively preventing the system 100 from being used again.